

Virginia Department of Forestry BMP Effort, Implementation, and Effectiveness Field Audit

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June 2005

Introduction

The twenty-first semi-annual forestry Best Management Practice (BMP) field audit was conducted by the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) in June 2005. The audit had three purposes: (1) to identify current levels of *effort* in attempting to use BMPs, whether or not BMPs meet technical specifications, (2) to identify current levels of *BMP implementation* as compared to the technical BMP implementation standards documented in the DOF BMP handbook titled *Forestry Best Management Practices For Water Quality In Virginia*, (3) to identify *effectiveness* levels for BMPs that have been implemented to DOF standards.

Methods

A total of 30 timber harvests were randomly selected from the timber harvests listed in the DOF information system as having been inspected by DOF or industry cooperators between November 1, 2004 and May 31, 2005. Timber harvests were selected from inspections made in each of DOF's six regions.

After site selection, team members divided into six groups. Timber harvests were divided among the groups. Each group traveled to their assigned timber harvests and inspected them. Local DOF field personnel helped each group locate their assigned sites. Information was collected at each site using a standard *BMP Effort, Implementation, and Effectiveness Audit Sheet*.

Findings

Efforts to implement BMPs were evident at 97% of inspected timber harvests, down from the 100% recorded in November 2004, (*fig.1*). Quality of effort, rated on a scale of 1(poor) to 5(excellent), averaged 3.0, up from the 2.7 average of November 2004. Implementation of all necessary BMPs to DOF standards occurred at

23% of inspected sites, up from the 10% recorded in November 2004 (*fig. 2*).

Fig. 1: Has An Effort Been Made To Apply BMPs, Regardless Of Meeting Technical Specifications?

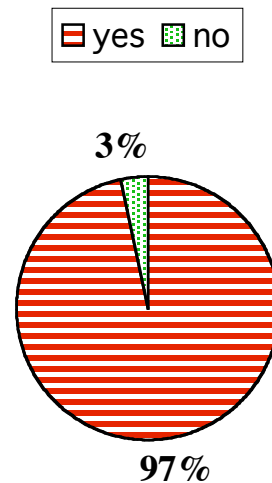
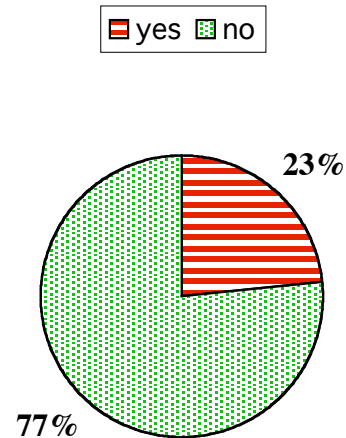


Fig. 2: Were All BMPs Applied To Technical Specifications As Expressed in The BMP Manual?



Active sedimentation existed at 7% of the inspected sites, down from the 14% recorded in November 2004, (*fig. 3*). The potential for sedimentation was noted at 13% of the inspected

sites, down from the 14% noted in November 2004, (fig. 4).

Of the 26 randomly inspected harvests that did not have all necessary BMPs in place, 21 lacked sufficient water control structures or had water control structures installed that did not meet DOF standards. In these instances, water bars, rolling dips, and broad based dips were absent, improperly designed, or improperly spaced. Culverts were too small, improperly installed, or not installed.

Fig. 3: Does Active Sedimentation Exist Now Because BMP Technical Specifications Were Not Met?

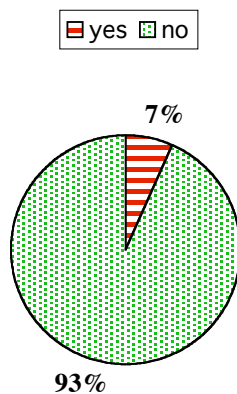
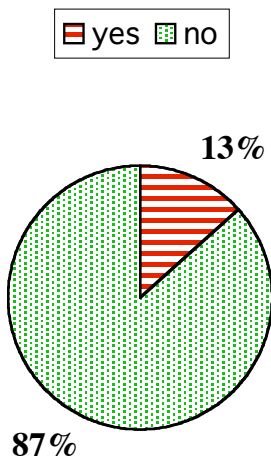


Fig. 4: Does The Potential Exist For Active Sedimentation To Develop Because BMP Technical Specifications Were Not Met?

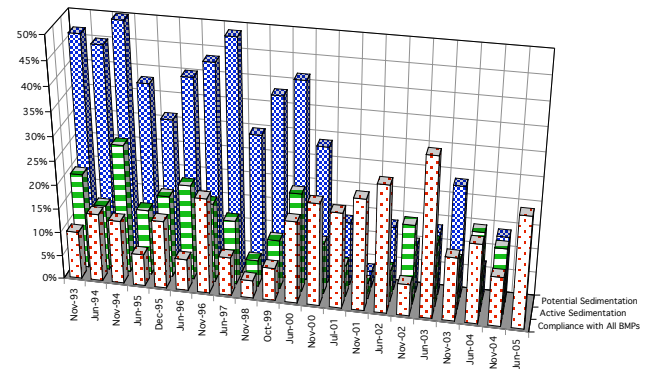


Vegetative cover was inadequate at 20 of the randomly inspected sites. Seeding had either not taken place, or was done in a manner that did not generate sufficient vegetative cover, defined as at least 70% coverage of disturbed mineral soil.

Stream crossings were inadequate at 7 of the randomly inspected harvests. These crossings did not have adequate bridges, culverts or sufficient natural rock to be considered acceptable rock fords.

Rutting in excess of BMP standards had occurred at 8 randomly inspected harvests.

Fig. 5: Three Trends



Skid trails or haul roads were too steep at 11 of the randomly inspected timber harvests.

Streamside management zones (SMZs) were inadequate at 10 of the randomly inspected timber harvests. Either no SMZ had been retained along a perennial stream, or trees within sections of the SMZ had been removed so that a continuous corridor of trees containing not less than 50 square feet of basal area, uniformly distributed for a minimum of 50 feet on each side of a stream, was not present.

Oil spills or excessive on site trash were found at 4 of the randomly inspected timber harvests.

More information about the June 2005 BMP Audit may be obtained from members of the audit team.

The Audit Team

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